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Weekend, February 24-26, 2017 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroP

Get ready to face 'The Beast.' 15

'LA LA LAND' VS. 'MOONLIGHT'

Which will take home the Best Picture Oscar? 12

Philly courts plan to silence your cellphone. 8

THE TANK

— PART 4 —

The Sixers shipped Nerlens Noel off to Dallas for a pittance. With Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons still sidelined, it could get ugly at the Wells Fargo Center again. 17

GETTY IMAGES

SWEDEN HITS BACK AT TRUMP, DEFENDS POLICIES

1 Sweden hit back at criticism from U.S. President Donald Trump, defending its generous immigration policies and saying the diversity from thousands of asylum seekers would build a stronger society. Sweden's image as a safe and stable society has come under close scrutiny in recent days after Trump appeared to refer to an attack there that had not happened and then

tweeted that generous immigration policies were not working. "The next time I hope the president, if he's going to speak about Sweden, is better informed about what the conditions really are here," Swedish Justice and Migration Minister Morgan Johansson told Reuters in an interview. REUTERS

TRUMP WANTS TO EXPAND US NUCLEAR ARSENAL

2 Donald Trump said he wants to build up the U.S. nuclear arsenal to ensure it is at the "top of the pack," saying the United States has fallen behind in its atomic weapons capacity. Trump also complained about Russian deployment of a cruise missile in violation of an arms control treaty and said he would raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin when and if they meet. On another front, Trump said China could solve the national security challenge posed by North Korea "very easily if they want to," ratcheting up pressure on Beijing to exert more influence to rein in Pyongyang's increasingly bellicose actions. Speaking from behind his desk in the Oval Office, Trump also declared himself "very angry" at North Korea's ballistic missile tests. REUTERS

REPUBLICAN BORDER TAX COULD BOOST US JOBS

3 President Donald Trump spoke favorably about a potentially export-boosting border adjustment tax being pushed by Republicans in the U.S. Congress, but did not specifically endorse it. Trump, who has lashed out at U.S. companies who have moved operations to countries like Mexico, has previously sent mixed signals on the proposal at the heart of a Republican

plan to overhaul the tax code for the first time in more than 30 years. "It could lead to a lot more jobs in the United States," Trump told Reuters in an interview, using his most positive language to date on the proposal. REUTERS

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

SPITTING FIRE

5 An actor performs fire spitting in São Paulo in front of the Municipal Theatre in São Paulo, Brazil. GETTY IMAGES

$435M POWERBALL TICKET SOLD IN INDIANA

4 A Powerball ticket sold in Indiana matched the winning numbers of a drawing on Wednesday for the game's $435 million jackpot, one of the largest in the lottery's history. The numbers drawn were 52, 10, 61, 28, and 13. The Powerball was 2. The winning ticket in Indiana is worth $435 million, the seventh-largest jackpot in the game's history, according to the lottery's website. Before Wednesday, the last time a winning ticket in the jackpot was sold was on Dec. 17. The odds of winning the jackpot were 1 in 292,201,338. Powerball's jackpot swelled to a record $1.6 billion in January 2016, when three winning tickets were sold in Florida, California, and Tennessee. The game and a second major U.S. lottery, Mega Millions, have exceeded $400 million only a few other times. REUTERS

WELCOME TO METRO.US!

MATT PRIGGE, NATIONAL FILM EDITOR

If you turn to our WKND section, you'll see six predictions for who and what will win Oscars on Sunday. You can also go to **metro.us/movie**, where we did the same for all of the other nominees. It's a great way to help with your Oscar pools. We'll still have more online coverage on the day itself, including the best (and worst) dressed, reports on who won and the most inspiring (or angry) anti-Trump speeches.

CORRECTION

In Thursday's edition, Metro incorrectly reported that Kari Hong, an immigration lawyer, estimated that the Department of Homeland Security's plan to hire 15,000 border patrol agents and ICE officers would cost at least $50 million in salaries alone. Ms. Hong actually estimated the cost would be at least $750 million.

PLAY TO WIN $100!

Every Monday, we pick a random winner from the participants who answered correctly one of the quizzes from the previous week.

metro.us/quiz

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Museum manager Jeff Bell adheres informative backing to gender neutral signs in the 21C Museum Hotel public restrooms in Durham, North Carolina. GETTY IMAGES

Philadelphia public schools will protect transgender students after Trump reversal

The president overturned landmark guidelines that permitted transgender students to use the bathroom of their choice.

ALEXIS SACHDEV
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The School District of Philadelphia will not align with President Donald Trump's order to overturn transgender bathroom protections, saying it will retain its bathroom policy to protect students.

"The School District of Philadelphia remains a safe and welcoming place of inclusion for all our students," Superintendent William Hite said in a statement. "Every student deserves to know their rights will be recognized and upheld at school. This announcement will not change any school district policy or city law that protects our students."

The Trump administration Wednesday revoked landmark guidelines issued to public schools by former President Barack Obama, which instructed public schools to allow transgender students to use the bathroom that corresponds with their gender identity.

Asked at a news briefing about concerns over Trump reversing the legislation, which was seen as a civil rights victory, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said the president believes it's an issue for states to decide.

"All you have to do is look at what the president's view has been for a long time, that this is not something that the federal government should be involved in, that this is a states' rights issue," Spicer said.

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos echoed that sentiment in a statement Wednesday: "This is an issue best solved at the state and local level. Schools, communities and families can find — and in many cases have found — solutions that protect all students."

"I have dedicated my career to advocating for and fighting on behalf of students," DeVos said. "And as secretary of education, I consider protecting all students, including LGBTQ students, not only a key priority for the department, but for every school in America."

In June, the School District of Philadelphia passed a series of policies to protect its transgender students, including allowing them to be referred to by their pronoun of choice, and try out for the athletic team of their gender choice.

"The School District of Philadelphia remains a safe and welcoming place of inclusion for all our students."
William Hite

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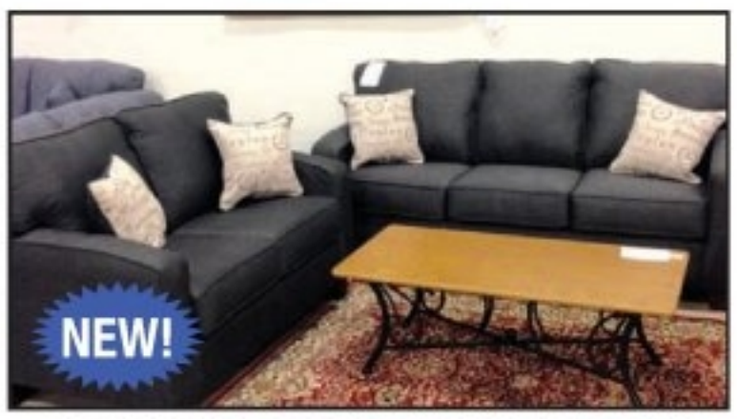

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Alumni Circle at Temple University. GETTY IMAGES

Temple's 'satellite center' for sex assault victims seen as sign of hope

Temple has partnered with Women Organized Against Rape.

MADELINE PRESLAND
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letters@metro.us

Former Temple University student Harmony Rodriguez felt abandoned by the college in 2014 when she tried to seek justice against her attacker.

After going to various departments throughout the university, she felt like no one was taking her reports of sexual assault seriously. The ordeal prompted he to sue the university. Her lawsuit that is still pending almost three years later.

But a recent development has given Rodriguez hope in Temple's ability to do more for assault victims.

Temple has partnered with Women Organized Against Rape, a sexual assault crisis center based in Center City. Officials from Temple reached out to the nonprofit to help run a "satellite center" where students can call a 24-hour hotline and receive help on the main campus.

The initiative has been praised by students at the Temple News in a recent editorial, especially regarding Title IX. The law bans sex discrimination in an educational facility that receives government funding — this includes discriminating against someone based on allegations of sexual assault.

Temple received a $26,000 state grant as a part of the "It's on Us" campaign to raise awareness of sexual assault at college campuses. The university dedicated funds to conducting focus groups and establishing support services through WOAR.

"We learned that students really wanted an alternative to police reporting," said Valerie Harrison, Temple's senior adviser to the president for compliance.

Rodriguez sued Temple in 2014, accusing the university of mishandling her case. She was open about her transgender status and believes it affected how she was treated by Temple officials and police officers.

> *"We learned that students really wanted an alternative to police reporting."*
> Valerie Harrison

"They didn't do anything when I was there," said Rodriguez. "You had to be lucky for them to care."

The university's partnership with WOAR may signal a new era for Temple — especially with skepticism surrounding Education Secretary Betsy Devos' stance on Title IX.

Pennsylvania Sen. Bob Casey grilled DeVos on the subject during her confirmation hearing last month. DeVos refused to comment on whether she would dedicate herself to upholding Title IX during the hearing. But Rodriguez is optimistic about the fate of her case and others.

"At this point, it's up to DeVos," said Rodriguez. "If activists and citizens hold DeVos to her duties, she will continue to have these complaints looked at — even if it is begrudgingly."

A 2015 survey conducted by the Department of Justice states that two out of three sexual assaults were unreported. Eighty percent of female college students who are sexually assaulted will not report the crime to the authorities, the survey stated.

"It's accountability," said WOAR Executive Director Monique Howard. "If someone has been assaulted, they can call our hotline and we can dispatch one of our volunteers to the campus."

WOAR staff and volunteers who work on Temple's campus aren't disclosing the location of the satellite office to protect those who seek help and resources. Temple students and any other assault victim can call the WOAR 24-hour hotline at 215-985-3333.

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To crack down on witness intimidation, Philly courts to ban phones

Sealing phone-pouch technology designed for concerts will get use in Philly courts.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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Philly criminal court will ban cellphones April 3 and require users to put phones in these sealed pouches. PROVIDED

The witness, a young man, seemed nervous while testifying in the murder case. When asked whether anyone had threatened him about taking the stand, he shocked the courtroom by pointing into the audience and saying, "That's one of them right there."

The man he pointed at quickly stood and left the courtroom, followed by court officers who arrested and charged him with witness intimidation.

To prevent such scenes from happening in the future, authorities are banning cellphones from the city's packed Criminal Justice Center. The ban takes effect on April 3.

"The proliferation of mobile devices throughout society has given rise to safety and security concerns in our courtrooms," said Administrative Judge Jacqueline F. Allen.

Courts will be using "Yondr," magnetically sealing cellphone pouches, which Allen said would "address a 21st century problem with a 21st century solution."

Yondr pouches were designed specifically to create cellphone-free events for musicians or performers. But Philly courts will be using them to prevent visitors from photographing sensitive materials or transmit any confidential information.

Members of the public will be required to place their cellphones in a Yondr pouch as they enter court. The pouches automatically seal once inside, and unseal as the person leaves the courtroom.

"Members of the public will keep their pouch-covered device with them, but will be unable to access it for purposes of taking photos or videos, sending text messages or placing/receiving phone calls," a First Judicial District of Pennsylvania news release explained.

The move comes after years of a rampant anti-snitching culture of witness intimidation in Philadelphia.

For more information about the cellphone ban, visit metro.us.

We want your pics!

Send Metro your photos to be featured in next Friday's issue. Post your best local photos to Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag #metropicsphilly to not only see them in our paper, but also on metro.us and our social media pages.

Alien president at a Philly rally. @MCH463/INSTAGRAM

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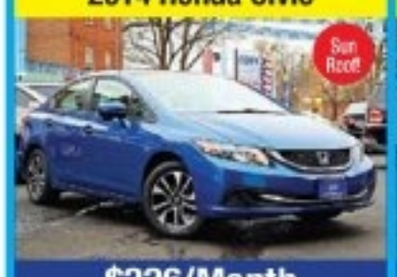

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Pentagon plan to defeat Islamic State to look beyond Iraq, Syria

The remarks by Marine General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, suggest the preliminary plan will be far broader in scope than initially thought and might initially omit more tactical details.

General Joseph Dunford GETTY IMAGES

A Pentagon-led plan to defeat Islamic State, due in draft form by Monday, will look beyond Iraq and Syria to include the threat from jihadists around the world fueling the conflict, America's top general said on Thursday.

"This is not about Syria and Iraq. It's about trans-regional threat," Dunford told a think-tank event in Washington, citing other jihadist groups like al Qaeda.

"So, when we go to the president with options, it will be in the context of the trans-regional threat."

Dunford noted U.S. military estimates that Islamic State had drawn 45,000 foreign fighters from more than 100 nations around the world.

"Our plan, to be successful, needs to, number one, cut the connective tissue between regional groups that now form a trans-regional threat," he said.

The U.S. military-led review includes input from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, as well as from the Treasury Department and the U.S. intelligence community. Dunford said it would also address Islamic State's resources and a narrative that allowed it to declare a self-styled caliphate.

The review of U.S. strategy comes at a decisive moment in the U.S.-led coalition effort against Islamic State in both Iraq and Syria, and could lead to relaxing some of the former Obama administration's policy restrictions, like limits on troop numbers.

The Baghdad-based U.S. commander on the ground, Army Lieutenant General Stephen Townsend, has said he believes U.S.-backed forces will recapture both of Islamic State's major strongholds - the cities of Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria - within the next six months. REUTERS

ADVICE TO DISGRUNTLED DEMS

TOM FOREMAN
Opinion

When I'm not dedicating my life to being an enemy of the people (those who have not signed up for Sarcasm 101, please see the registrar) I wonder what Democrats are going to do with all this anger they are whipping up like a Sunday gumbo; those steaming tides flooding the streets, those waves of fierce constituents bellowing at members of Congress.

I wonder what will happen to all that energy, because if it just makes people feel better it will largely be a waste of time — and in the long run they will only feel worse. Yes, I know. I've mentioned this before and some of you hated it. Perhaps you're already pulling out the cardboard and markers to make new signs damning my insensitivity. But I've covered local, state, and national politics for 40 years now, and unhinged, undirected fury almost never makes a difference.

Consider this: Aside from the occasional "Right to Life" marches, how often can you recall Republicans protesting in the avenues about something in the Obama years? They could have. They were plenty angry. And they are no smarter than their Democratic counterparts. But their political DNA told them to do something else — to raise money, recruit candidates, go on talk shows, pay attention to local races and win seat after seat at all levels of government. They've been so good at it, their party now controls the redistricting process in many places and have essentially locked those seats up for the foreseeable future.

If you are a Democrat or Independent, you may hate that. (And btw as a professional journalist, I don't care who wins or loses the political wars.) But I can tell you marching, yelling, and signing petitions will not change the equation. It is the follow-up that counts: the slow, deliberate, boring, grinding, and inglorious work that looks terrible on Facebook but puts real people in real positions to make real votes at key moments. As the mayor of South Bend, Pete Buttigieg (who would like to be head of the Democratic National Committee) said on CNN, "Don't get mad. Get on your school board."

Otherwise, you're just making noise.

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Mexico voices 'worry and irritation' to Trump envoys

Senior Mexican officials on Thursday expressed "worry and irritation" about U.S. policies during a visit by two of President Donald Trump's top envoys, who in turn sought to cool tempers after weeks of tension between the neighbors.

"There exists among Mexicans worry and irritation about what are perceived to be policies that could be harmful for the national interest and for Mexicans here and abroad," Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray told a news conference.

He was speaking after talks in the Mexican capital with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Homeland Security chief John Kelly.

Looking stern as he stood beside the U.S. visitors, Videgaray said it is "a complex time" for U.S.-Mexican relations, which have gone downhill quickly since Donald Trump was elected president last November.

The U.S. government this week angered Mexico by saying it was seeking to deport many illegal immigrants to Mexico if they entered the United States from there, regardless of their nationality.

The immigration guidelines are the latest point of tension between neighbors that have also been at odds over Trump's vow to build a wall on the border and his attempts to browbeat Mexico into giving concessions on trade.

Videgaray and President Enrique Peña Nieto have been criticized at home for being too willing to engage with Trump, who has repeatedly cranked up tension with the country ahead of key meetings.

Both sides on Thursday pledged further dialogue on migration, trade and security issues facing both nations. Kelly and Tillerson were much more measured in their words than either the Mexicans or Trump, who on Thursday said a military operation was being carried out to clear "bad dudes" from the United States.

Luis Videgaray GETTY IMAGES

"There exists among Mexicans worry and irritation about what are perceived to be policies that could be harmful for the national interest and for Mexicans here and abroad."

Videgaray

Kelly said there would be "no use of military force in immigration operations," and "no, repeat, no" mass deportations.

None of the officials made direct references to the deportation of immigrants from third countries to Mexico, or to paying for the border wall planned by Trump, a red-flag issue for Mexico. REUTERS

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Oscar predictions: Who will win, who will lose

wknd

Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone bust a move in "La La Land." DALE ROBINETTE

Oscar predicting is bulls—. It's a science the way astrology is a science, which is to say, it's not one. But we can certainly make wild assumptions! If you need a leg-up on your Oscar pool, we've made some semi-educated guesses. But we'll do you one better: We've also included who we'd vote for if we were a member of the Academy — you know, in case you were wondering. MATT PRIGGE

BEST PICTURE

What will win: *"La La Land"*
What should win: *"Moonlight"*

The one category that seems like a lock is this one: The movie with the most nominations will (probably, almost certainly) claim the top prize. Some say "Moonlight" offers stiff competition, but it has only eight noms — almost half of "La La Land's." So, sorry, you beautiful, devastating yet ultimately hopeful look at a poor, black, gay kid: You'll almost certainly lose to the happy (but, honestly, not *that* happy) musical. But you shouldn't, and not only because you offer a timely message about empathy. You're even better than timely. You're a work of original, deeply felt art.

BEST ACTRESS

DALE ROBINETTE

Who will win: *Emma Stone, "La La Land"*
Who should win: *Isabelle Huppert, "Elle"*

Isabelle Huppert has been winning every award she's qualified for, and rightly so. As a woman who deals very unusually, to put it mildly, with the aftermath of a sexual assault, she's absolutely thrilling: by turns coiled and disarmingly playful. But these are the Oscars. They'll probably go with the person Americans actually know, not France's mightiest ice queen. But at least Huppert will snap some more adorable pictures for her unexpectedly cute Instagram feed.

BEST ACTOR

CLAIRE FOGLER

Who will win:
Casey Affleck, "Manchester by the Sea"
Who should win:
Casey Affleck, "Manchester by the Sea"

We'll just say that Casey Affleck is a brilliant actor and has been forever, and his turn as a man who can't articulate or deal with his bottomless guilt is second only to Huppert in "Elle."

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Who will win: *Viola Davis, "Fences"*
Who should win: *Viola Davis, "Fences"*

Some have argued that Davis' turn in "Fences" should be considered a leading role. We're not so sure; the movie does push her into the limelight in the home stretch, but even after Denzel Washington's hellion of a former baseballer goes AWOL, it's still really about him. His absence is as strong as his presence. But whatever: She's nominated here, and she's head and shoulders above the other nominees — even Octavia Spencer doing a master class in patience-as-strength in "Hidden Figures."

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Who will win: *Dev Patel, "Lion"*
Who should win: *Mahershala Ali, "Moonlight"*

We've spotted a couple "Will Dev Patel win an Oscar???" posts as we scrolled madly through Twitter en route to grim news stories. So we'll bite: Maybe he will win for "Lion," in which he mostly looks ashen and emotionally remote (but has great hair). We do worry that the death march of this awards season has made people forget how incredible Mahershala Ali is in "Moonlight," though. We can't get his performance out of our heads: How he defies the expectations of his character, how he makes him a decent man who could still deal drugs, the way he deflates in his two final scenes. But who knows? At least Aaron Taylor-Johnson isn't here to weirdly steal his thunder, as he was at the Globes.

MARK ROGERS

BEST DIRECTOR

GETTY IMAGES

Who will win: *Damien Chazelle, "La La Land"*
Who should win: *Barry Jenkins, "Moonlight"*

Damien Chazelle (pictured) is the new golden boy of Hollywood. But if "La La Land" must win Best Picture, can Barry Jenkins please go home with Best Director? Often the two awards are seen as one, but the Oscars have split them before, including last year. ("Spotlight" won Picture, but Director went to "The Revenant's" Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, again.) Jenkins winning would be a helluva success story, too: a filmmaker who couldn't get a second feature off the ground for nine years, who makes history as the first black filmmaker to win the trophy (and the fourth ever nominated). Also, there's the pesky notion that Jenkins deserves to win.

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"Kedi"

Director: Ceyda Torun
Genre: Cat documentary
Rating: NR
●●●●○

There's plenty more adorbs cat action where this came from in the Turkish doc "Kedi," which opens today at the Ritz at the Bourse, 400 Ranstead St. OSCILLOSCOPE LABORATORIES

Every now and then, the political columnist Ana Marie Cox floods her Twitter feed with cute pet photos. Sometimes it's because the world suddenly got awful. Other times it's just 'cause.

The doc "Kedi," about stray cats skulking about Istanbul, is an Ana Marie Cox pet deluge in cinematic form. It's an 80-minute dopamine rush for those who need it. It has perfect timing, too: Experts (to those who still listen to them) advise against freebasing 24/7 on panic. Time-sucks are no longer caked in guilt; they're necessary for mental stability, long as we don't disappear permanently into an oblivion of obliviousness.

In "Kedi" — which is, in fact, the Turkish word for "cat" — they sleep on roofs, they perch on motorcycles, they play in beds of soil. There are catfights and meow-offs. A manx and a tabby are seen curled up together in slumber, like a furry yin-and-yang symbol. This one time, a cat paws madly at a bakery store window, its meows muffled by the glass, and it is indeed the most darling thing ever.

Honestly, if this was all there was to "Kedi," that would be fine. But there is more to it. It's part cat gawk session and part city symphony. It never addresses the dark times that have descended upon Turkey. But that doesn't feel like a dodge; it's more like an act of defiance. It shows an Istanbul rich with life, filled with people who keep on keepin' on, forming communities between not only fellow humans but their animal neighbors, too.

And, of course, there are cats. Did we mention the fresh litter of gray newborns that mewl hoarsely from inside a cardboard box? Or the part where three tabby cats line up in a row according to height? Why are other movies even made? MATT PRIGGE

"Get Out"

Director: Jordan Peele
Stars: Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams
Rating: R

●●●●○

The craziest thing about Jordan Peele's "Get Out" is this: Sometimes it's even better as a horror movie than a social critique. Essentially "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" repurposed as an intentionally terrifying chiller, it has a lot to say about the tensions simmering under the America Obama left us (and more semi-accidental commentary since You Know Who took over). But it would work fine even if you weren't woke.

OK, maybe not: You'd have to be pretty thick to miss the subtext. It's not even subtext; it's the text. Daniel Kaluuya plays Chris, a rising photographer who's about to meet the parents. He's also black, a detail his (white) girlfriend of three months, Rose (Allison Williams), has not thought to provide to the bougie suburbanites who raised her. They're a bit overemphatically chill — dad (Bradley Whitford) would have voted for Obama a third time! — but Chris slowly realizes something weirder and crazier is afoot.

We won't reveal the truth (though the trailers almost do), but we will say what Peele is doing is more than mere Breitbart blogger trolling (which would have been fine, too). Of course he throws in some LOLs, but neither the occasional laughs nor its satirical digs subtract from the menacing tone. By preying on our nerves and our real-world fears, he's created something that's scary in more ways than one. MP

Daniel Kaluuya finds himself meeting the parents of his girlfriend (Allison Williams) in tilywhite suburbia in Jordan Peele's "Get Out." JUSTIN LUBIN

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Is 'Ultimate Beastmaster' a ripoff of 'American NinjaWarrior'?

Creator Dave Broome reveals the quirks that set it apart.

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Who will win the title of "Ultimate Beastmaster" in Season 1? ROBERT VOETS/NETFLIX

At first glance, the new Netflix series "Ultimate Beastmaster" looks a lot like NBC's "American Ninja Warrior," but if you look deeper, it's breaking new ground in the reality-competition genre.

Created by Dave Broome ("The Biggest Loser") and executive produced by Broome and action-movie icon Sylvester Stallone, the show has a unique global element, with six different versions catering to each competing country: Brazil, South Korea, Mexico, Germany, Japan and the United States. Each will include a different set of hosts speaking the native language of each country.

Over the course of 10 episodes, 108 competitors will attempt to complete "The Beast," a 600-foot-long obstacle course dreamed up by Broome:

"I was thinking [of building something] like a transformer. That was the first image that got into my head — something that had that mechanical, monster-like look. I talked to my graphics team and I said, 'I want this thing to be like the size of two soccer fields,' and they're like, 'This guy is freakin' nuts. We're not going to pull it off.' So it started like that."

But in this brave new world, it's all about going big or going home and in the end, The Beast was built and now lives out in Santa Clarita, 20 minutes from Magic Mountain.

"Drew Barrymore ripped us off," Broome jokes, referring to the actress' new Netflix show, "The Santa Clarita Diet."

And how did Stallone get involved with "Ultimate Beastmaster?"

> *"Sylvester wanted to do it... the insurance wouldn't pay for that."*
> Broome

Broome explains that he came onboard early in the process, even contributing behind the scenes:

"We had a good relationship and he really loved the concept of the show. He helped with some of the design, some of the positioning of [The Beast]. He was like, "Let's make the shoulder blades higher than the neck. Put the head down so it looks like it's going to attack." He's got a really brilliant eye for that stuff."

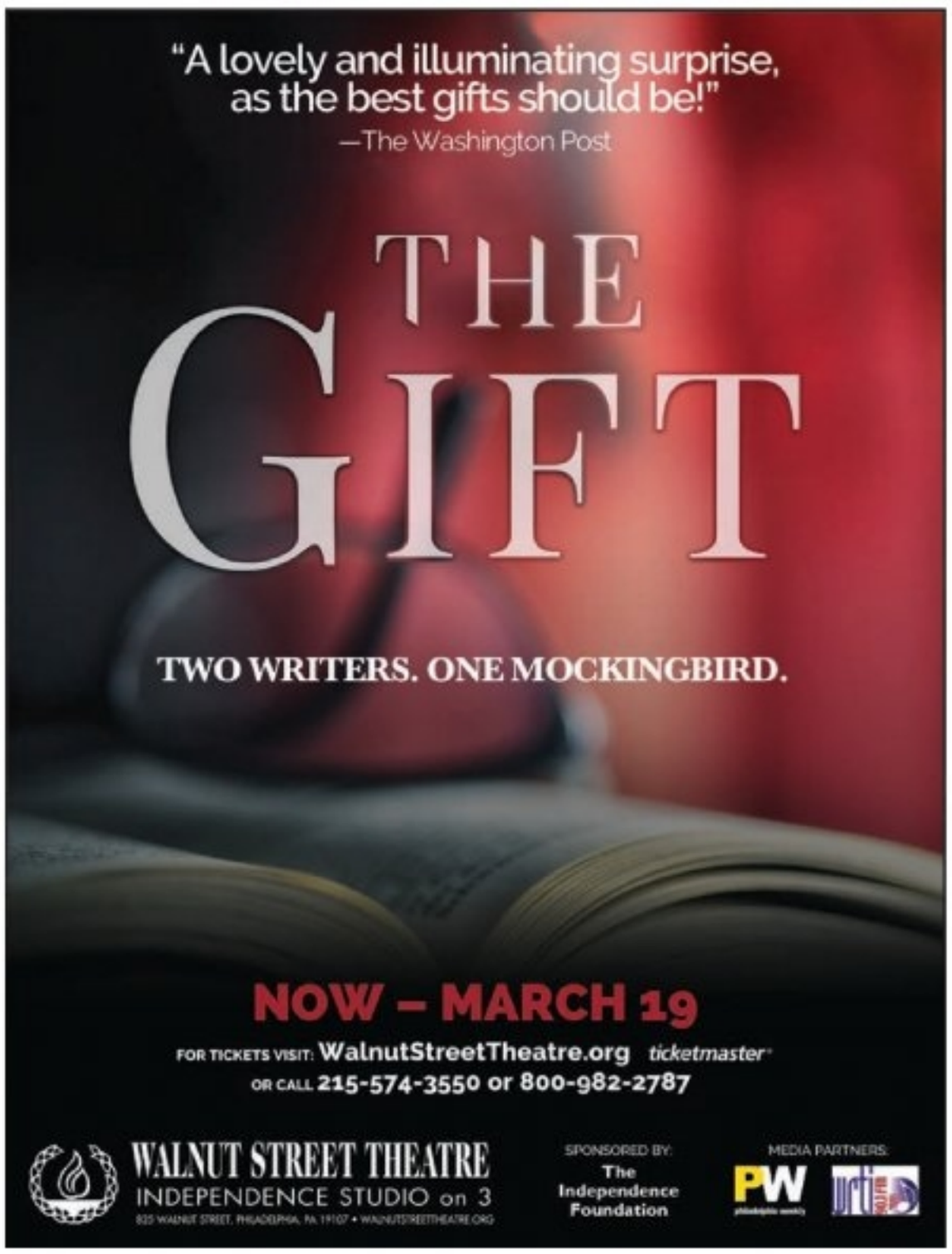
But don't expect to see Stallone running through the course, Rocky-style:

"Sylvester wanted to do it, but I wouldn't let him. The insurance wouldn't pay for that," Broome admits.

In true Netflix fashion, the entire first season of "Ultimate Beastmaster" will be made available on its release date, but is this something to binge-watch or slowly savor?

"With the storyline, you don't have to worry about missing an episode. It's all there," Broome notes. "As a producer, I want people to watch it the way they want to watch it."

"Ultimate Beastmaster" will be available for streaming on Netflix today.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One-man showman Will Stutts is alone no more

The Walnut Street Theatre's favorite solo performer brings a few more people on stage for his play "The Gift."

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From left: Susan Riley Stevens and Warren Kelley star in "The Gift." PROVIDED

There are two things that actor-playwright Will Stutts is best known for: a host of smart, self-written one-person shows and a history of performing them at the Walnut Street Theatre. In his time as a thespian ("this is my 50th anniversary," says Stutts, a former Philly resident), he created "Journey Through the Mind … Edgar Allan Poe," "Walt Whitman: Liberal and Lusty as Nature" and "Noel Coward at the Cafe de Paris," along with many others. What brings him to the Walnut next has nothing to do with acting or one-man shows. Instead, it is Stutts the playwright's "The Gift" — a somewhat fictionalized version of the life of Truman Capote and Harper Lee — that he'll deliver to his favorite theater space.

You worked so much with the Walnut Street Theater. Yet you are currently living in Sanibel Island, Florida, and hail from the South. How did you make your way up north to begin with?

I was born in Alabama and was going to be a doctor — University of Alabama medical school, pediatric medicine — yet, when I happened into the university's drama department, where they were casting for Chekhov's "The Seagull," I read for a part, didn't get it, and, in what sounds like a cliche story, a week later I got a call. The young man who won the part I auditioned for took ill — he literally broke his leg. So they asked me to do it. From then, I switched my major and continued on the theatrical path.

Longtime president and producing artistic director Bernard Havard is dedicated to the biographical play. He is also dedicated to you, in particular, because you've performed there in dozens of roles.

Yes, I have had that privilege, and it is amazing. I don't think there is a producer who is more receptive to the artist than Bernard. I don't know from whence this comes, but he fights hard for what he believes and allows artists enough rope to hang themselves. He is all about the survival of the artist — never interferes, always respects. He has been kind enough over a protracted number of years to invite me to the Walnut, commissioning many of my plays such as my Frank Lloyd Wright show and even this new one. I really only had Poe, Twain and Walt Whitman under my belt before the Walnut. Everything since has been a commission, which is unusual and wonderful.

Bernard Havard commissioned "The Gift." Why did he want you to write about another writer?

I had been kicking around this idea for years — the unanswered questions about what role Truman Capote had in the life and work of his best friend Harper Lee. There were never any answers. She helped him research books such as "In Cold Blood," but never authored anything. How did she come up with a Pulitzer Prize winner such as "To Kill a Mockingbird"? Did he write it and give it to her? That was the relationship I wanted to write about. I wanted to know where his impulses … and hers … came from. It is about tormented genius and co-dependency. It is also about friends helping each other — basically friends with benefits, but just not those benefits.

Will Stutts' "The Gift" runs from Feb. 21 through March 19 at Walnut Street Theatre's Independence Studio on 3, 825 Walnut St. $35-$45, 215-574-3550, walnutstreettheatre.org

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Sixers present, future looks worse after trade deadline debacle

The Sixers traded Nerlens Noel away for — basically — nothing Thursday.

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The basketball sins committed by the Sixers and by president of basketball operations Bryan Colangelo in recent weeks is makes for a pretty substantially long list.

Sam Hinkie practically left the team with a can't-lose situation once Joel Embiid hit the floor, played like an All-Star and future superstar and had the team literally gunning for a playoff spot.

But Colangelo found a way to ruin it.

After trading away a solid, but expiring and older piece in Ersan Ilyasova for two second-round picks (a trade that was defendable as it opened up more minutes for rising star Dario Saric), Philly announced it had officially traded away one of it's premiere big men.

But the wrong one. And for basically nothing.

After weeks of trade buzz, after being held away from the team during a road trip and then embarrassingly reunited with the team after no trade took place, Jahlil Okafor did not get moved on Thursday.

Rather it was rim protector Nerlens Noel — whom many projected had better trade value than Okafor.

Perhaps he did. While Okafor apparently had zero trade appeal (the Sixers reportedly offered Okafor for Avery Bradley and the Celtics said no), Noel's value was a top-18 protected pick that will become two second-rounders when the Mavericks finish in the lottery.

Philly also acquired Andrew Bogut, who at last notice was negotiating a package to be released by Philly in addition to 23-year-old shooting guard Justin Anderson, who averaged 6.5 points per game in 51 games in Dallas but has been compared to Harrison Barnes by several scouts.

After all of that, Philly got a few second-round picks and the Mavericks got the big men of the future.

The tankathon looks to be heading for its fourth straight year, as Embiid's outage will be extended at least four games while Sixers fans wait to hear the results of Ben Simmons' most recent exam — the odds are he'll be held out for the year.

The sad part is it didn't have to be this way.

Two second-rounders and Anderson weren't enough for Philly to jettison Embiid's insurance policy in Noel — who offered Philly the rare chance to have a true rim protector on the floor for 48 minutes per game. They could have conceivably used some of their exceptionally large stockpile of cap space to make an offer for the restricted free agent in June.

The Kings and Lakers did Philly massive draft-related favors, as the Sixers stood a chance at surpassing the Kings and swapping picks with them as they start their tank sans DeMarcus Cousins — and also reaping the benefits of Magic Johnson's ascension to power in Los Angeles. Philly holds the Lakers' pick if it falls outside the top three, and if not they get it in 2018.

Instead Philly will have Okafor starting the next four games while Embiid sits, and will have another offseason full of drama and uncertainty regarding their now backup center who doesn't fit.

None of the moves this week have helped the Sixers position themselves for the present or the future. Colangelo looks like he has no idea how to build a roster. And the Sixers will continue to flail and trip over themselves as they cautiously crawl toward contention.

Nerlens Noel is gone, but Jahlil Okafor remains — who would have thought? GETTY IMAGES

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For Flyers, getting win in Pittsburgh more important than playing outdoors

If the weather holds, the Flyers will face the Penguins at Heinz Field Saturday.

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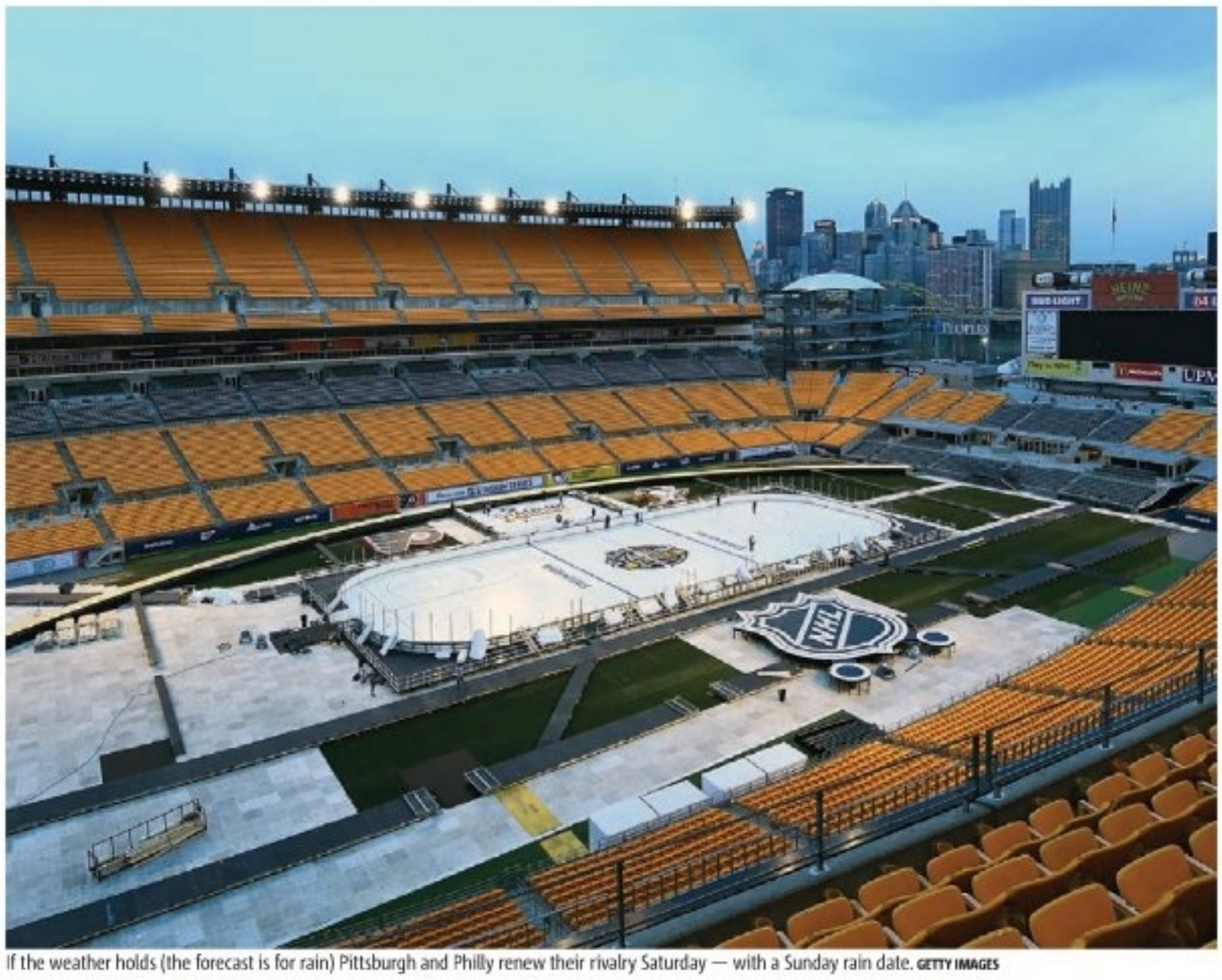

If the weather holds (the forecast is for rain) Pittsburgh and Philly renew their rivalry Saturday — with a Sunday rain date. GETTY IMAGES

When the Flyers take on the cross-state rival Penguins on Saturday night in a Stadium Series game at Heinz Field, normally the home to the NFL's Steelers, defenseman Andrew MacDonald knows what emotions his teammates, especially the ones who will participate in their first outdoor game, will be feeling.

"It's special," MacDonald said after a recent home game this month. "It was a tremendous experience."

MacDonald, who played for the Islanders in the 2014 game against the Rangers at Yankee Stadium, recalled how he thoroughly enjoyed the day before the game when the team held a practice and then the truly special moments as he took a few laps around the rink with his family during a family skate.

The day of the game exceeded his expectations as he consumed the pageantry, atmosphere, 50,000 fans in attendance and the action on the ice that night in the Bronx.

Close to 70,000 fans are expected to fill up Heinz Field, which will be buzzing with events before and during the game.

"Walking toward the ice, it's a long walk from the dressing room and you have that adrenaline rush and special feeling when get out there," said MacDonald, who played a team-high 24 minutes in the 2-1 loss. "You try and treat it as a normal game but you quickly realize it's not. You do your best to settle in and try not to let the magnitude of the stadium take over. I think everyone is looking forward to it and it will be an important game for us, too."

It is, indeed.

The Flyers went into Thursday night's games three points behind the Islanders for the last wild-card berth in the Eastern Conference with 22 games remaining the regular season. Needless to say, every point is crucial for the Flyers, who are just 9-15-4 since their 10-game winning streak ended in December.

Meanwhile, Pittsburgh owns the third-best record in the league and is 6-1-3 in its last 10 games.

"It's a big two points for us," said captain Claude Giroux, who played in the Flyers' 2-1 loss at the Winter Classic in 2010 against the Bruins at Fenway Park and in the 3-2 loss in 2012 at Citizens Bank Park against the Rangers. "We are playing a good team but our focus is going to be on the two points."

Defenseman Mark Streit agreed with MacDonald's advice that the Flyers need to have tunnel vision and only concentrate on the Penguins.

"We can't get carried away by the event or the people or whatever it is," said Streit, who will play in his first outdoor game. "It's a 60-minute hockey game and it's going to be outdoors, but we need to find a way to win.

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And just like that, Villanova's 48-game home win streak is over

The Wildcats will look to start a new Pavillon winning streak as they make a push for a Big East title.

JON MARKS
@MetroPhilly
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Yes, Butler did it — again!

And with the Bulldogs' 74-66 win over Villanova very late Wednesday night, the Wildcats' 48-game winning streak in their usual cozy Pavilion came to an end. Not only that, it marked the first time in their stellar careers Nova seniors Josh Hart and Kris Jenkins left the building on the short end.

So was this simply a blip on the 26-3 second-ranked Cats' radar screen? A bad night against the lone opponent that seems to match up well against them, having previously knocked off Jay Wright's team, 66-58, Jan. 4? Or should more be read into it?

Naturally, Wright, Hart and Jalen Brunson, who scored a game-high 24 points, would prefer the former.

"Sometimes you come into a game and the other team plays better," said a philosophical Wright, after an improbable 18-0 Butler run over a 5½-minute span in the final 10 minutes proved his team's undoing. "You try everything. Our guys competed to the end. We just ran into a team that played better than us tonight."

On the other hand, maybe the Cats were simply due for a clunker. Having dispatched Xavier, DePaul and Seton Hall on the road by a combined 51 points despite playing without injured center Darryl Reynolds, it seemed only a matter of time before 'Nova's depth and lack of size would catch up with them.

Things were bound to slip away eventually in Villanova's friendly Mainline confines. GETTY IMAGES

With Reynolds down Villanova's essentially been forced to go with a six-man rotation, plugging soph Eric Paschal into Reynolds' spot. That left versatile Donte DiVincenzo as Wright's only option off the bench, though freshman Dylan Painter has occasionally gotten the call.

Of course, Wright wasn't buying that, either.

"I don't think so," said Wright, following 'Nova's first Pavilion loss since 2013. "We've been in these games before and done this before. Our guys are in great shape. I just think they came in and really executed offensively and defensively. They just guard us really well and we don't handle their physicality. We turned the ball over [15 turnovers], only had eight assists and couldn't get any offensive rebounds."

But until that 18-0 eruption which turned a 49-42 'Nova lead mark into a 60-49 deficit, it appeared the Wildcats were well on their way to overcoming those deficiencies and wrapping up the Big East regular-season title in the process. Instead, now they'll have to wonder how far this might drop them in the rankings and more important, if it might cost the defending champs a No. 1 seed when the NCAA tournament rolls around in a few weeks.

As far as Hart and Brunson are concerned, it simply means they need to be better prepared when Creighton comes to town Saturday.

"It's over now. We just have to learn from it," Hart said. "When you lose it's a tough pill to swallow, no matter what. And you never like to lose at home."

With that streak unexpectedly over, the Wildcats want to maintain one other distinction when they take the court for their final home game on Senior Day. They haven't lost back-to-back games since 2013.

"I'm really proud of them," Wright said. "We have great seniors and they'll look back on this later."

For now, though, they just want to get the bad taste of defeat out of their mouths as quickly as possible. "We have to have better attention to detail," said Hart, after watching the Bulldogs shoot 15-for-25, 60 percent in the second half, with Kelan Martin coming off the bench to score 22 points and lead the way. "On the defensive end we got exposed — and that starts with me."

It ended with Butler, no stranger to winning big games in recent years, celebrating on the Pavilion floor, a rare sight.

The question is: Will that serve as a wake-up call for the Wildcats or a preview of what's to come?

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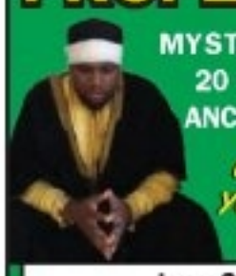
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Court of Common Pleas for the County of Philadelphia, January term, 2017, No. 1616.

Notice is hereby given that on January 17, 2017, the petition of Iphlal Ishrat was filed, praying for a decree to change his name to Iflal Ishrat Johnson.

The Court has fixed court date, February 24, 2017 at 11:30 AM, in Room No. 691, City Hall, Philadelphia, PA for hearing. All persons interested may appear and show cause if any they have, why the prayer of the said petition should not be granted.

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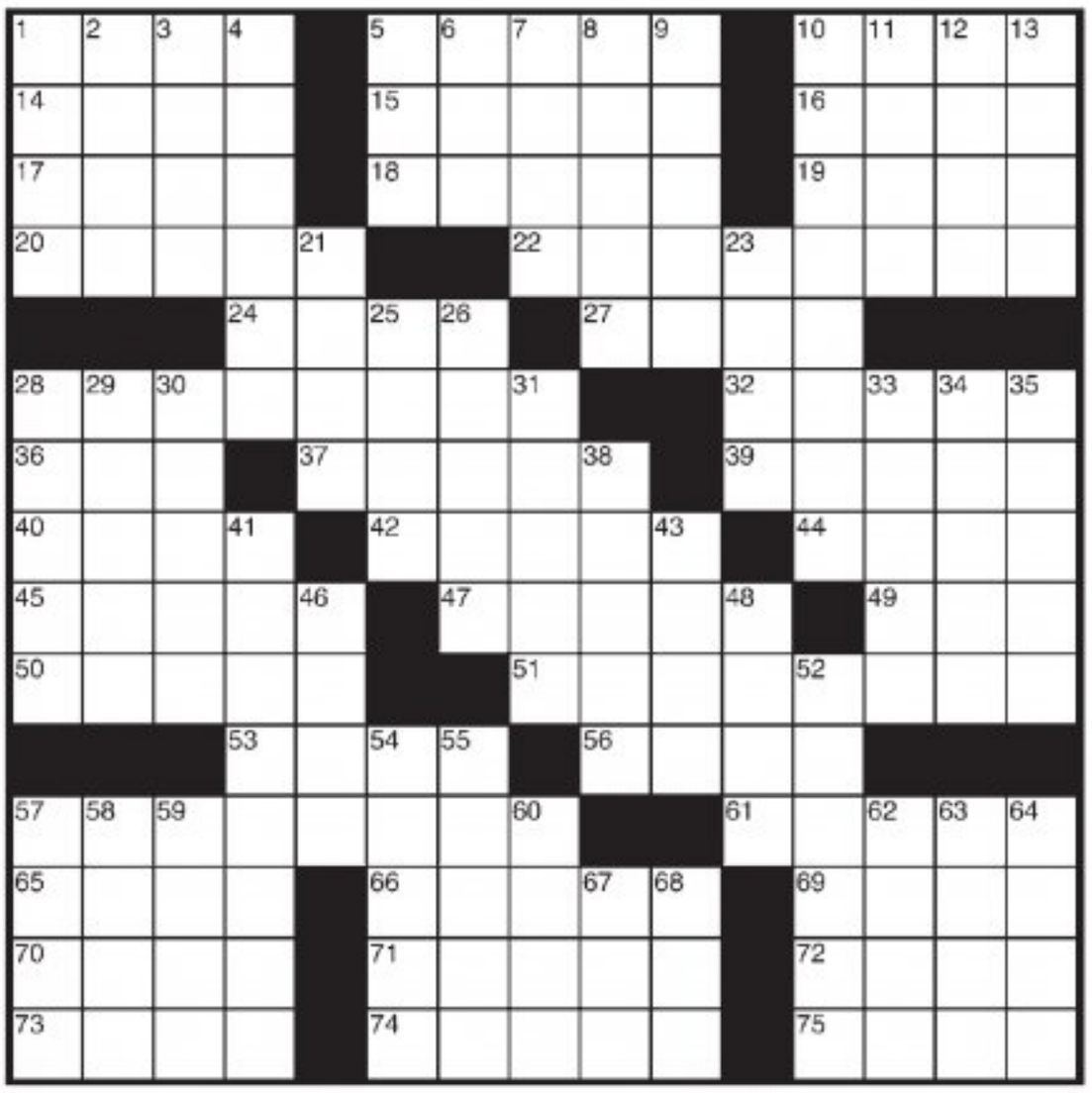
17 Diva's rendition
18 Utters loudly
19 Comet's head
20 Work crews
22 Grapefruit crater
24 Rinse off
27 Lummox
28 Lavish
32 Bobby who lost to Billie Jean
36 -- -tzu of the "Tao"
37 Noted absurdist
39 Column order
40 Off-road getabouts
42 Sparkling adornment
44 Jules Verne captain
45 Some are big
47 Mournful poem
49 Trendy meat
50 Come next
51 Tall beer glass
53 Clutch
56 Mock fanfare (hyph.)
57 Aussie jumper
61 It makes scents
65 Sheltered
66 Web surfer's need
69 "Cope Book" aunt
70 Romanov title
71 Broke off
72 Shoal
73 Uh-oh!
74 Work stations
75 Thrilled

Down

1 Chase flies
2 Turkish coin
3 Norse Zeus
4 Darwin's ship
5 XXI times C
6 Teacup handle
7 Trickle down
8 Flawless
9 Kid who rode Diablo
10 Trade
11 Block
12 Frosty coating
13 Gliders do it
21 "-- Smile" (Hall & Oates tune)
23 Northern Iraqi
25 Battery word
26 Jazzman -- Blake
28 Forest clearing
29 Wolfed down
30 Exploding stars
31 Ice floe dwellers
33 In leaf
34 -- a break!
35 Look high and low
38 Upright
41 Good hitters
43 Ottoman title
46 Vaccines
48 Skywalker's mentor
52 Wayne genre
54 -- to the teeth
55 Folk hero from Kentucky
57 Clouseau's valet
58 To boot
59 Lowest high tide
60 Chances
62 Park feature
63 Revival shout
64 White-water transport
67 Cartoon mice -- and Meek
68 Rx writers



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easy

2	7		5				6	
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hard

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	8	1		7				6
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9		2		3				

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Personal gain looks promising, as long as you are fair in your assessments and in how you treat others. High-pressure situations will require courtesy and accuracy.

Taurus Don't give away private information in an emotional rush to counter someone's innuendoes. Remain calm and secretive until you gather the facts.

Gemini Taking a business trip or getting away with an enjoyable someone will lead to positive developments and a chance to improve your lifestyle.

Cancer The experience you have will give you something to think about. Sign up for something you've never done before or take a course that will boost your confidence.

Leo Plan a brief trip that will benefit you personally and professionally. Love and romance are featured, and will have an impact on your life.

Virgo Make changes at home that will cut your overhead. Stabilizing your situation can be accomplished if you are adaptable and disciplined.

Libra Socializing will lead to an interesting encounter with someone who can shed light on a situation that affects you. Share information and take immediate action.

Scorpio Keep your personal thoughts and plans a secret. The less anyone knows, the easier it will be for you to get things underway without interference.

Sagittarius Don't be afraid to do things your way. Taking a different path than that touted by someone trying to convince you that his or her way is best will put you in control.

Capricorn Don't push back if someone tries to coerce you into an argument. Back away amicably before matters get out of hand. Choose to use intelligence over force.

Aquarius Don't hide the way you feel. By sharing your emotions, you will be able to change the fabric of your relationship with others. Revive old dreams.

Pisces Confusion will set in if you let an emotional situation get in the way of what you are supposed to be doing. You cannot change how others think or feel. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

G	R	O	G	S	■	F	A	T	H	A	■	C	P	L
P	E	R	O	T	■	O	G	E	E	S	■	A	L	I
S	P	E	A	R	■	R	U	N	E	S	■	L	A	S
■	■	■	I	R	K	E	D	■	U	N	L	I	T	■
A	R	R	I	V	E	S	■	■	T	R	E	A	D	S
B	E	A	D	E	D	■	D	W	E	E	B	■	■	■
L	E	S	E	■	O	H	A	R	A	■	R	A	M	A
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■	■	■	I	R	O	N	S	■	I	C	K	I	E	R
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New! Advanced Multi-Correcting Eye Balm, formulated with HydraBLUR technology, works to help visibly reduce the appearance of crow's feet, puffiness, dark circles and wrinkles. 0.5 oz. $65. ★ WebID 3581785.
Advanced Multi-Correcting Day Cream, 1.7 oz. $87. ★ 2278200.
Nuit Beauty Sleep Perfector Advanced Multi-Correcting Gel-in-Oil, 1.7 oz. $89. ★ 2497927.
Advanced Skin Corrector, 1 oz. $79 (★ 2700973); 3.4 oz. $185 (★ 1866791).

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